

TO THE

K I N G ' s

Most Excellent Majesty,

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The LORDS *Spiritual* and *Temporal* and  
in *Parliament* Assembled;

*The Humble Petition of Ezekiel Goddard of Kings-Lynn,  
in the County of Norfolk; in behalf of many Millions now  
Employed in the Wollen Manufacture of this Kingdom.*

**H**umbly Sheweth, Whereas the Wollen-Manufacture is exceedingly decayed in so great measure, that many Thousands have not Employments at all wherewith to buy Bread, and without doubt it is occasioned by the Exportation of Wool, Woolfells and Yarn made of Wool; whereby the Subjects of other Nations, are employed in the Manufacturing the Wool of this Kingdom; and both employ their own People, and enrich their Subjects, and impoverish this sometimes flourishing Nation of *England* and the Subjects thereof; which if not very speedily prevented, the Richer Sort will be made incapable to maintain the Poor; and your Petitioner having a long Time been sensible of the same, he Humbly conceives, that he hath found out a way how to prevent

so great a Mischief, which may be fully effectual to prevent it; and therefore begs the Pardon of this High Court of Parliament, for presuming to discover his Sentiments therein, which are as followeth.

**First, That it might be Enacted,** That all Owners of Sheep within this Kingdom, may be compelled by themselves or Servants, to give an Oath before the Minister or Church warden of the Parish where they dwell, of the Quantity of the Weight of *Wool* that shall be shorn from off their Sheep every Ensuing Year, within Six Days after their Sheep are shorn; and that such Oath shall be by the Minister and Churchwardens Registered in a Book, to be bought at the Charge of the said Parishes under a Penalty that shall be thought fit.

**Secondly, That it might be Enacted,** That the Owners of the Wool, shall not sell any part of their Wool to any Person whatsoever, but such as shall make Oath before the Minister of the said Parish, that they will convert, or cause the same Wool to be converted into Yarn or Cloth, or Stuffs, Stockings or Hatts, and the said Oaths to be Registered in the said Books, together with the Name of the Buyer and Place of his Abode, under such Penalty as shall be thought fit.

**Thirdly, That it might be Enacted,** That no Person whatsoever shall buy and sell any Wool whatsoever (except only; that all Fell mongers may have Liberty to sell such Wool, as they pull from off the Skins that they shall buy, and all Woolcombers may have Liberty to sell all such short Wool as is taken out of the Fleeces after they are broken, which is not fit for Combing, and also all their Noyls) provided that they shall not sell any such Skin Wool, Short Wool or Noyls, but to such as shall make Oath that they will convert, or cause the same to be converted into Yarn, Cloth, Stuffs, or Stockings, or Hatts, and that all Wool-Sraplers shall within six Weeks after the publishing the Act, sell and deliver all such Wool as shall be in the Hands of themselves, or Others for their Use, to such Persons as shall make Oath to convert the same as aforesaid, under the Penalty of forfeiting the same; and that no Wool-Srapler

Stapler or Wool-Jobber, shall buy or sell any Wool for the future, under the penalty of forfeiting the same.

Fourthly, **That it might be Enacted**, That no Person whatsoever under any pretence whatsoever, shall put or cause to be put aboard any Ship or Vessel, Boar, Barge or other Vessel of what Denomination soever, any Wool, Woolfells or Yarn made of Wool, under the penalty of forfeiting the same.

Fifthly, **That it might be Enacted**, That no Person whatsoever, under any pretence whatsoever, shall take aboard, or suffer to be taken aboard any such Ship or Vessel whatsoever, any Wool, Woolfells or Yarn made of Wool; under the penalty of forfeiting the said Ship or Vessel whatsoever, together with all the Rigging, Tackle, Furniture, Utensils and Apparel whatsoever, to the said Ship belonging.

Sixthly, **That it might be Enacted**, That all Wool, Woolfells or Yarn made of Wool; that shall be found in any part of this Kingdom to be Screw packed or Press packed, whether on Land or on Ship-board, shall be forfeited, and shall be to be the Use of Him, Her or Them that shall first discover or seize the same.

Seventhly, **That it may be Enacted**, That it shall be lawful for any Person or Persons, that shall be the first that shall discover or seize of any Wool, Woolfells, or Yarn made of Wool; so taken on board, or put on board, or being on board of any such Ship, or any Boat, or other Vessel whatsoever; shall have all the said Wool, Woolfells, or Yarn made of Wool, to his, her, or their Use or Uses, and to no other Use or Uses whatsoever, and also shall have and enjoy the said Ship, Hoy or Vessel of what Denomination soever to his, her and their own Use or Uses, together with the Furniture of the same, and to no other Use whatsoever, notwithstanding any thing whatsoever to the contrary; together with such further Benevolence as shall be thought fit for so good Service done to the Nation, which Benevolence (if any shall be thought fit to be given) may be Levied upon the County, where such Wool, Wool-

fills, or Yarn made of Wool, shall be laid on board as aforesaid. Provided, That all such Wool as shall be imported into this Kingdom from *Scotland, Ireland*, or any other Forreign Countries; shall not be intended to be within the Compass or Meaning of the Act.

8. And that whereas many Persons that get their Living by the Wollen Manufacture, live remote from such places where such Wool may be had at the best Advantage; and have not Horses to fetch such Wool as will be needful from the Owners of the Wool, **That it may be Enacted**, That all Cities and Corporations, and Market-Towns within this Kingdom, shall find and provide sufficient Store-houses or Chambers, meet and convenient, ceiled about with Boards and plaunched with Boards, and kept in good repair with all needful Reparations, to keep Wool as much as may be from taking any Damage, and that it shall be Lawful for all Persons whatsoever, that will bring or send any Wool, Woolfills, or Yarn made of Wool, to such City, Corporation or Market Town, to lodge the same in the said Store house or Chambers, in order to sell and dispose of the same to such Persons as shall make Oath as aforesaid; that they will convert, or cause the said Wool to be converted into Yarn, or Cloth, or Stuffs, or Stockings, or Hats, and the same Oath to be Registred in a Book, to be provided at the Cost and Charge of the said City, Corporation, or Market Town, and Locks and Keys to secure the said Wool; and every City, Corporation or Market Town where such Store house shall be kept, shall make Choice of a fit Person to be Key-keeper, and Orderer of the said Store-houses or Store chambers, for which said Person so to be Chosen the *Munday* in every *Easter Week*, the Inhabitants of every City, Corporation, or Market-Town, shall be liable to make ample Satisfaction to the Owner of any Wool, that may at any time happen to be lost, stolen or embesseled out of the said Store-houses; and that it shall be Lawful for the said Store keeper to ask, demand or receive of all the Owners of Wool, Lodged or Laid into any such Store-house or Chamber, two Pence at the Time of any parcel so Lodged, whether small or great parcel and no more, and four Pence for every Affidavit made at the Sale and Delivery of every

every parcel for the Person that keeps the Register Books, and Six pence for every pack lying any time not exceeding a Year, towards providing such Store-houses, and paying for Repairs and Six-pence for every pack towards the Maintainance of the Store-keeper, which shall by himself or some other by him appointed, be ready to lock and unlock the said Storehouses or Chambers, at the Request of the Owners of the Wool or their Servants, and shall receive the same Monies not exceeding Eighteen Pence at the most for every pack.

IX. ~~That it may be Enacted~~, That any Person that shall discover or seize of any Wool, Woolfells, or Yarn made of Wool, by Virtue of this Act; may for the better making of it appear, that he, she or they were the first Discoverers of the same, they shall (if they please) repair to the Minister or Church-wardens of the Parish, where such Discovery shall be made; or the Minister and Church-wardens of any other Parish, and there make Oath of such Discoveries, which Oath shall be recorded in the Books before-mentioned, with the Name of the Discoverer, and the Year, Month, Day and Hour when such Oath was made.

And that if any Act be made to this Effect, that it may be made as soon as may with Conveniency be, and that it may be read in all Places of Publick Worship, and proclaimed in all Markets, that due Notice may be taken and due Obedience given to the same.

Also I Humbly beg Pardon for my Boldness, in giving my Reason for the absolute Necessity of making an Act to this purpose.

1. It may prevent the Owners of Sheep from Transporting their own Wool, by being liable to give an Account to whom they sell it.

2. If no Person may be suffered to buy and sell Wool, then it will hinder all Engrossers of Wool from Transporting any Wool; and will also be of great Advantage to the Manufacturers, who are forced to buy of the Engrosser at a dearer Rate

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by Four or Five Shillings a Tod, than the Engrosser of the Wool pay'd for it to the Owner of the Sheep; and Exporters of Wool are worse than Engrossers of Corn.

3. My Reasons for prohibiting all Wool from being Water-born are, because it is an easie Matter to bribe a Custom-house Officer, to give up any Bond that shall be Entered for the Relanding of any Wool, that shall pass Coastways by Coquet, or it is an Easie Matter to procure or counterfeit a false Certificate that such Wool is relanded, though it never was, and I beleive, that passing of Wool from Port to Port, hath been the great Cause of Transportation.

4. My Reason for the having all Wool that shall be screw packt or press packt forfeited, is, because Wool may be packt or screwed into a Narrow Compass, either into Cask or into close Package, and cannot be well discover'd from other Goods, and therefore ought to be forfeited wherever it shall be found.

5. My Reason why it shall be Lawful for any Person, that shall be the first Instrument of finding any Wool, that shall be water born, or pressed, or screwed, or shall be the first that shall discover or seize the same, may have all such Wool, Woollens, or Yarn made of Wool to his, her or their own Use, and the Ship or Boat, or Vessel also; is, because it will make all People diligent to find out such Wool, and also it will certainly terrifie all Men from Transporting any; for none will be safe in Bribing, nor can any Man pretend to bribe any, without being in all probability likely to be betrayed, either by Labourers or Boatmen, or the Master of the Ship, or of the Ship's Company, all which must be bribed, and greatly, otherwise they will discover.

6. All Laws heretofore made have not been Effectual, to hinder Transportation; tho' many Good Laws have been made mixed with Corporal Punishments, as Loss of Life, Limbs, or Imprisonment, and have not been put in Execution, out of Tenderness to the Lives and Liberties of the Offenders.

7. The Wool of this Nation being wholly manufactured in the Nation, is of so great Benefit to the Nation as cannot be well Expressed; and indeed is the only Support of the Inhabitants thereof, and if it be transported, will most certainly prove the Nation's Ruine and Destruction; and impoverish it in so great measure as cannot be Expressed, and may bring all into Disorder and Confusion, which God in Mercy prevent; and those that do transport, or aid, or assist, or conceal such Transportations, are the greatest Enemies that the Nation ever had or can have (Traitors only excepted) for whereas other Criminals may be guilty of taking away the Lives of some few, these are guilty of Endeavouring to put Millions to the Most cruel Death that ever was invented; that is to say, to be starved to Death for want of Food; and also if the chief Trade of the Nation be transmitted to the Neighbouring Nations, then the Strength and Wealth of the Nation is lost, and may in a short Time, lay the Nation open to be subdued by those that finding the Benefit of our Fleeces, may use all Hostile Means to obtain the Sheep, and the Lands that feed the Sheep; which Sheep and Lands are more Worth than all the Gold Dust in the *West Indiei*.

*Which God grant, this High Court of Parliament may by Making an Act to this Purpose prevent, and thereby the Whole Nation's Ruine may (by God's Blessing) be prevented, Amen, So be it,*

*August, the 10th.*  
1700.

*Is and Shall be the Prayer of*  
*Your Humble Petitioner.*

~~FOR THE PETITIONERS.~~

*moreover*



**M**oreover, If an Act might pass, to pardon all such as have been guilty of Exporting Wool, Woolfells, or Yarn made of Wool ; provided they will make Confessions, and acknowledge under their Hands and Seals, and name the Places of their Abode, and make full Confession, what Quantities of the said Goods, to the best of their Remembrance or Knowledge, they have been guilty of Exporting, and who were the Owners or Part-Owners of the same ; in what Vessels the same were sent, and to what Places the same were sent, and to whom the same were consigned, and whether they were Owners of the same, or in Partnership with others ; and what others by Name, or whether they shipp'd the said Goods by Commission from others, and what they had for so doing ; and by whom they were paid, and how the said Goods were pack'd, whether any part thereof was combed Wool, and how much, and of whom it was bought ; whether any part of it was passed as Coast-ways by Coquet, and how much, and what Methods were taken to clear the Bonds ; whether it was convey'd aboard by Boat, or by what means ; at what Places it was shipp'd, and whether in the Day time, or in the Night ; whether any part and how much, was sent over under the Notion of other Goods, and what sort of Goods, whether *Tobacco*, *Sugars*, or *Wollen Cloths*, or what other Goods, and what Money was received for Exportation of the said Goods, which such Wool was passed or shipp'd under Colour of ; whether the Masters of the Vessels had any share thereof, or were privy to the said Exportations, and what Security was given for securing the Vessels, and what Fraights were usually given for the same ; and *Finally*, what Methods were taken, to prevent the Discovery of the said Exportations, to the best of their Knowledge.

And if any Person that hath been guilty of such Practices, shall neglect to make and sign such Confession, upon his,  
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her, or their Oaths, or shall neglect to deliver the said Confession ( Attested and Witnessed before some Justice of the Peace ) to the Lord Mayor of the City of *London* for the time being, and whose Clerk shall Record the same ; and the Party guilty of such Exportation shall deliver the said Confession as aforesaid within Thirty Days after the publishing of the Act, and shall pay the Clerk for Recording the same ; which Clerk shall keep a Catalogue of the Names of the Parties Confessing, and the place of their abode ; in order that this High Court of Parliament may at their pleasure have a sight of the said Confessions, and the names of them that are to be indemnified ; and if any Person that shall be found guilty of such Crime, and hath not made and delivered such Confession so as aforesaid, then he, she or they, shall upon due proof that they have been guilty, forfeit all their Goods and Chattels, Lands and Tenements, and be banished out of this Kingdom as Persons not fit to live therein ; one Moiety to him, her or them that shall make the same Matter appear upon the Oaths of two Witnesses or more ; and the Parties that shall be instrumental in discovering the same, shall receive the benefit of the Pardon ; the other Moiety to be to the Poor of the Parishes where the Offenders live.

And that a Clause may be made annex'd to the Act, to cause all Men above the Age of sixteen Years ( Noblemen and their Sons excepted ) to take an Oath, that they will not Export, or send out of this Kingdom any Wool, or Woollfells, or Yarn made of Wool ; nor will not directly or indirectly, aid or assist any so to do ; and that they will discover all such, as shall ( to their Knowledge ) be any ways instrumental in so doing, and will to the best of their Ability hinder all such Practices.

And your Petitioner doubts not, but by making of Laws to the same Effect, as in this his Petition mentioned ; that all Exportation of Wool will be hindred and great Sums of Money saved, which have been paid to the Exporters of Wool, under the Notion of Goods that receive back Money

to the Owners when Exported ; and that it will, to the great Admiracion of this High Court of Parliament, bring to light many great Abuses put upon the King and the whole Kingdom : And if any Objections shall be made against what is petitioned for ; I hope, that the Answer to such may be sufficient, that never any Law was ever made, but some or other might object against it ; but if it was made for the benefit of the *Major* Part of the Nation in General, as I am sure, this will be to the benefits of Thousands to the Hindrance of one ; then all Men will grant that it will be a good Law. And I think my Cost and Charge, and great Labour well bestowed ; which otherwise I could ill have undergone, being weak in Body and of mean Estate,

And to conclude, I question not but those that are the great Engrossers of Wool, will be found to be the Cause why so much Wool is exported, and ought to be hindered from buying and selling of any Wool ; and I am very confident, that without the hindrance of Wool from being Exported, the Nation will be ruined, and that suddenly.

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